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The Non-Subscribing Presbyterian

No. 333. JUNE, 1934.

TO KNOW. TO WILL. TO DARE.

And to keep silence.—JAMES III., 2.

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NOTES AND NEWS.

The Volume of the Sacred Law rests on a place of honour, either on lectern or pulpit, and in processions a month hence, its emblem will be carried as a token of civil and religious liberty. But in its place in the House of God, the Bible itself is an emblem of the Word, by which all things are made, the expression of the Divine Thought. Open its pages; it begins with darkness and chaos, it closes with the name Lord Jesus. Whatever the details, compiled from time to time in the course of ages, it outlines the rise and growth of a remarkable race of people, and in that is mirrored the evolution of the human race from animalism to the highest spirituality — from the savage to the Christ—the eternal purpose fulfilled in Christ Jesus, that full flower of human life, of which His brethren are the opening buds.

* * *

Our Church has no official teaching; but, spontaneously a large amount of unanimity has been arrived at, because of the liberty of thought which has been exercised, and it would be true to say that the belief we hold is that the Scriptures are neither verbally nor uniformly inspired, but in a general sense only; that with things literally true are mingled other things to be spiritually and allegorically understood, and much that is fanciful and disedifying.

* * *

"The Bible Standards" is a well-known term, and those "Standards," whatever they are, to the fundamentalists, are "the last word." Islam has perhaps the most extreme form of bibliolatry, that of the Muhammadan with his Koran. A Unitarian may get a hearing from Islam by basing his contention on the Koran, and declaring "it is written!"

* * *

An old rector who had for many years been an invalid, had almost become a stranger to his parishioners, and a commission was sent to make enquiries. Greatly to the astonishment and chagrin of some present, the old gentleman himself turned up, to listen to the evidence. He had some pointed questions to ask his curate and a subordinate neighbouring clergyman, one of whom stated that he took his stand on the Bible. "Well, I don't!" replied the rector. "If I did so, I would be offering burnt sacrifices. I go by the "Book of Common Prayer." As a sound Churchman, the old gentleman got the better of his critics, and won the day.

* * *

It is noteworthy that the present outcry against Unitarianism is not based on the Bible, as is the case with the Bible Standards' League opposing modernism, **but on the creeds,** about

SUBSIDY FUND.

The Treasurer begs to acknowledge with thanks the receipt of the following subscription :—

Warrenpoint Congregation (per Miss Bailie) £0 10 5

Contributions should be addressed to the Manager, Rev A. Davison, Dromore, by whom they will be gratefully acknowledged.

which the overwhelming majority of Orthodox Presbyterians know nothing, with perhaps the exception of the Apostles' Creed.

* * *

From the strictly theological point of view, the Apostles' Creed is Unitarian, and was used regularly by Theophilus Lindsey, the first in England to use the name Unitarian. The late Professor James Drummond in his "Studies in Christian Doctrine," proves conclusively that the Nicene Creed is not an effectual barrier against Arianism, but that it is "un-Trinitarian!" and at a meeting once held in Bristol several of the leading Unitarian ministers of the day being present, it was almost unanimously agreed that, leaving out the damnatory clauses of the Athanasian Creed, and substituting the word "manifestation" for "person," they would have no difficulty in accepting it. His Grace the Archbishop of York and the Lord Bishop of Durham have declared against Unitarians being acknowledged as sharing in the Christian Communion, thereby condemning a man like Dean Stanley, who admitted that he was as much an Unitarian as Dr. Martineau—Arians have occupied the Papal throne.

* * *

The late Archdeacon Westcott, son of the famous Bishop of Durham, remarked to us, "I quite see the logic of your position; but it is not Christianity, at least in the traditional sense of the term." "Then what is the purpose of Christianity," we asked. "To save us from the wrath, whatever that may mean!" **There** we have the crux of the whole controversy.

"Divinity has fled from the workshops and offices, just as it has fled from the woods and streams. It has taken refuge in the Churches and the Chapels, or at least is alleged to be there. The work of the world, which was once a sacred thing, has become secular. There is hardly anybody nowadays to tell the good workman as the old religion told him that he is just the kind of person God delights in. There is hardly anybody to tell the jerry-builder that he is a servant of the Devil."—Dr. L. P. Jacks.

NON-SUBSCRIBING PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF IRELAND.

Annual Meetings.

Attention is drawn to the Annual Meetings of our Church, which will be held on Tuesday and Wednesday, June 19th and 20th, and the programme is as follows:—

Tuesday, 2.30 p.m. — Association Annual Meeting in the Minor Hall, Belfast.

4.30 p.m.—Remonstrant Synod of Ulster in the First Presbyterian Church, Belfast.

8 p.m.—Synod Lecture in the First Church, "Our Place in the Great Christian Tradition," by the Rev. Lawrence Redfern, M.A., B.D., of Liverpool.

Wednesday, 10.30 a.m.—Communion Service conducted by the Rev. J. J. Magill, B.A., Moderator.

11.15 a.m.—Synod Meeting in the Central Hall, Belfast.

7.30 p.m.—Conversazione in the Central Hall.

The Rev. Lawrence Redfern, M.A., B.D., who is to give the Synod Lecture this year on "Our Place in the Great Christian Tradition," was the preacher in the Liverpool Cathedral on Sunday morning, October 22nd, 1933, at the Assize Service. Previously Mr. Redfern had acted as Chaplain to the High Sheriff of Lancashire, and being a well-known Christian minister in Liverpool, who worked in friendly co-operation with the Cathedral clergy and ministers of all sects for the welfare of the city, the Dean invited him to preach in the Cathedral. This was a broad-minded gesture, and was warmly welcomed by progressive people of all denominations.

The controversy over Unitarian preachers being invited to occupy the pulpit in Liverpool Cathedral has aroused widespread interest, and stimulated curiosity as to the character and history of the Unitarian movement and its teaching. Many members of our Non-Subscribing Presbyterian Churches will welcome the opportunity of hearing Mr. Redfern in June.

CONVERSAZIONE.

On Wednesday evening, June 20th,

in connection with the annual meetings of the Non-Subscribing Presbyterian Church of Ireland, a Conversazione will be held in the Central Hall, Belfast. The desire has been repeatedly expressed for more opportunity of fellowship amongst the members of our different Churches, and this event has been organised to fulfil this need.

Guests will be received and welcomed by the Rev. J. D. Davies, of Moneyrea (Moderator-Elect) and Mrs. Davies from 7.30 to 8 p.m. An orchestra will play at intervals during the proceedings, and three vocalists have kindly consented to sing. Refreshments will be provided, and ample opportunity given for meeting friends and for conversation. A short address will also be given by the Rev. Lawrence Redfern, of Liverpool.

The tickets for this event are on sale in all our Churches at a charge of one shilling each, and it is hoped that many of our adherents will avail themselves of this opportunity for social intercourse.

J. H. E.

PRAYER.

O Thou, Who art Life and Light, illuminate our beloved Church, and bestow Thy power and blessing on the General Synod, the Supreme Court of our Church, that its meetings may be filled with peace, love and harmony; that courtesy of speech, reverence and brotherliness may prevail

SUNDAY SCHOOL CONFERENCE.

We would remind our readers of the Annual Sunday School Conference which will take place at Downpatrick on Saturday, 2nd June, at 3.30 p.m. The speaker will be the Rev. T. Munn, of Cairncastle, and his subject, "The Bible as a Text-book for the Sunday School."

Tea will be provided by the Downpatrick congregation at a charge of 6d. The usual collection will be taken in aid of Conference Funds. The members of the Belfast Churches who wish to attend the Conference would do well to get into touch with one another in order to take advantage of the greatly reduced fare offered by the Belfast and County Down Railway Co. to a party of 100 or over. The ordinary excursion fare is 2/8. For a party of 100, 1/8. For a party of 200, 1/7. Train leaves Belfast at 1.50 p.m. Return 7.15 p.m. Bus (B.O.C.) leaves North Street Depot, Belfast, at 1.30 p.m. Return Buses, 6.10 and 7.30 p.m.

WOMEN ELDERS AND MINISTERS.

We are indebted to the Clerk of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Ireland for the following information:—

(1) The Church of Scotland has not admitted a woman to either the ministry or the eldership, nor is she eligible to hold either office in that Church.

(2) The U.F. Church of Scotland (continuing) has declared women eligible for the Ministry on the same conditions as men.

(3) The Presbyterian Church in Ireland has enacted that women are eligible for the eldership on the same conditions as men; but has **not** granted eligibility to the ministry.

OF THE ELDERS.

The elders must be men of good type and godly conversation, without blame and all suspition; carefull for the flocke, wise, and, above all thynges, fearing God. . . . . And they differ from the ministers, in that they preache not the Worde, nor minister the Sacraments. In assemblying the people, neither they withoute the ministers, nor the ministers withoute them, can attempt anything. And if any of the juste nombre want, the minister, by the consent of the rest, warneth the people thereof, and finalye admonisheth them to observe the same ordre which was used in chosing the ministers.

JOHN KNOX.

1560 yeiris.
At Edinburghe.

Published on the **Fifth** Saturday of the month. Copy should be in before the **23rd** at the latest. Editor: Rev. John Barron, Ballywalter, Co. Down.

DOMESTIC MISSION.

Our "Mothers' Day" services, held on Sunday, May 6th, were well attended. The morning programme was contributed by the Sunday school children. Three interesting papers on the subject "How to Help and Honour Mother" were prepared and read by senior pupils. The success of the services was due chiefly to the efficient training of the children by our organists and Sunday school teachers.

The Annual Floral Services will be held on Sunday, June 10th. Special music will be rendered by the choir, under the leadership of Miss F. Newman, A.T.C.L. The Sunday school children will take part in the afternoon service.

The Sunday Fellowship Class spent a very happy evening on Friday, 11th, when about twenty-five members and friends met for a social time.

The Women's League annual pic-nic will be held on Monday, May 28th, when the members will make a tour of the County Down coast to Newcastle.

The Debating Circle will meet once a month during the summer season for a social evening, so that all the members may keep in touch until normal activities are resumed.

Annual league games of ping-pong have been concluded, in which our players took part. As opportunity offers, however, practice is maintained, so that our members may be in good form when the season opens.

The Social Club has drawn up a series of rambles for the summer season. Already a number have taken place. This form of outing is becoming popular, and promises healthful recreation for the young people.

We acknowledge with thanks gift of books from Mrs. E . J. Leith.

WM. EAKIN.

The Divine Wisdom.

"The eternal purpose fulfilled in Christ Jesus," Eph. iii., ii. "The Law of Evolution and the Great Plan."

The Non-Subscribing Presbyterian can be obtained at the Depository, 35 Rosemary Street, Belfast.

A HUNDRED YEARS AGO

(From the "Northern Whig," May, 1834).

Unitarianism in Dromore.

At a meeting of the First Presbyterian Congregation of Dromore, David Lindsay, Esq., in the Chair, the following resolutions were proposed and unanimously agreed to:—

Resolved, 1—That our most cordial thanks are due to our Minister, the Rev. S. C. Nelson, for the excellent course of lectures delivered to us in this place, in which he so ably defended our principles as Unitarian Dissenters, and illustrated the superiority of our primitive and Scriptural faith.

Resolved, 2—That notwithstanding the insidious and malignant attempts made by some of the advocates of unscriptural creeds and articles to sow dissension in this parish, we contemplate with the highest satisfaction the triumphant strides which pure and unadulterated religion is moving around us, teaching our brethren to cast off the trammels that have been forged and imposed by fallible men, to stand fast in that liberty wherewith Christ has made us free, and to live peaceably with all men.

In an Assembly in England an endownment is equally divided among the ministers comprising it. Some years ago the right of a certain minister to be there was somewhat dubious, but, for the sake of peace and harmony, no comment was made. It happened, however, that one year, because of illness, this minister was absent. When the distribution was to be made, it was agreed that the division be according to the number present, and that afterwards each minister should give from his own pocket a contribution for the absent minister, and a letter of sympathy be sent with it. One by one the ministers came forward, and each laid a sovereign on the table, and that, more than any argument, brought home the true position of affairs, after which this particular claim was not renewed.

OBITUARY.

MRS. HUGH ENNIS.

Mrs. Hugh Ennis, late of Ballyhemlin Farm, passed away on Wednesday, May 9th, after a long illness. She belonged to one of the old foundation families of the congregation, her own family, the Millars having occupied the farm for several generations. Mrs. Ennis was one of the very few now surviving who span at the spinning wheel, and it was interesting to watch her at work, and with it she had interesting fragments of folk-lore. Though the infirmity of years long prevented her attendance at her place of worship, her heart was always there, and her memory was stored with names and incidents, recalling the days when there was not an empty seat in the Meeting-House. Her son, Adam, who was devoted to her, died last summer, and some years ago her daughter, who was an enthusiastic Church worker, passed away scarcely without a warning—a shock which left a deep impression on the mother. Her husband and a grandson, Samuel Ennis, are the only survivors of the family. Mr. Hugh Ennis has reached advanced years in life, and has been obliged to retire from carrying on the farm, which has now passed into other hands. The family was widely known in the district, and there has been much sympathy with them in the happenings of late years.

SHARMAN D. NEILL.

Our Holywood congregation has lost, by the death of Mr. Sharman D. Neill, of Ardmoyle, Cultra, one of its oldest and most esteemed members. He had been in failing health for some time, and passed peacefully away on Saturday, April 21st, at the age of 77. Mr. Neill, who was a native of Holywood, had a long and honourable business career in Belfast as proprietor of the well-known firm of jewellers and silver smiths bearing his name. It is said that his father, Mr. James Neill, whom he succeeded in the business, was associated with Lord Kevlin in the development of the great scientist's compass. Mr. Neill took little to do with public affairs, but he was a keen yachtsman, and was at one time vice-commodore of the Royal North of Ireland Yacht Club. He was a generous friend of many good causes, honoured and beloved by those among whom he lived, and will be greatly missed by a wide circle of friends. Little more than a month ago he lost by death his brother, Mr.I Robert Neill, who was a member of our Sidmouth congregation in England. During the war Mr. and Mrs. Neill had the great sorrow of losing both their sons, who were serving as officers in the Ulster Division, and were killed in action. Mr. Neill is survived by Mrs. Neill and three daughters, with whom our sincere sympathy is expressed. Reference was made to Mr. Neill's passing at the morning service in the First Presbyterian Church on Sunday, April 22nd, and the congregation stood in silence as a mark of respect and sympathy. The funeral, which was strictly private, took place at Holywood cemetery on Tuesday, April 24th.

CRUMLIN.

We record with sorrow the death of two of our older members, Andrew Stewart (67), died 24th April, after a trying illness, and our sympathy is with his widow and only surviving brother.

Miss Letitia Kennedy (83) died 8th May, the last of a family long connected with this Church.

It is to be hoped that those who are left to carry on the work of our Church will realise that every loss, by whatever means, leaves more to be done by those who remain, which burden can be lightened only by consecrated purpose and devoted sacrifice.

G. P. J.

A CHILD'S PRAYER.

Make me, dear Lord, polite and kind
To everyone, I pray;
And may I ask You, how You find
Yourself, dear Lord, to-day?
—Edna St. Vincent Millay (from "The Theosophist.")

REPORTS.

All Souls', Belfast.—The Rev. S. P. Whitehouse, in a sermon, referred to the action of three vicars in Wallasey, Cheshire, withdrawing from the local Christians' Council because of the presence on it of Unitarian ministers. "Christ could mix freely with publicans, sinners and outcasts, but these men could not serve on a public body which admitted Unitarians. Reference was made to hymn writers, and to memorbale Unitarians in the various spheres of life. "The chief difference seems to be that we say openly we will not subscribe, while others subscribe with reservations." Reports appeared in the Belfast newspapers.

Crumlin.—We offer our hearty good wishes to Miss Mamie Thompson, who was married to Constable Hugh Thompson (R.U.C.) on 25th April in this Church. Our one regret is that since their home is to be made in the County Tyrone, we thereby lose one of our more active young members.

Templepatrick. — On Sunday, 13th May, a special service was held in the Church here at 4 o'clock in the afternoon. The weather was wintry, but even so, a goodly congregation assembled, and we were cheered to see so many friends from as far away as Ballymena, Ballymoney and Belfast. Rev. John Begg, of Larne, was the preacher, and he gave us an interesting and helpful sermon which was closely related throughout to the "Signs of the Times." It was listened to most attentively. Mr. Joseph Gordon, of Larne, sang two much appreciated solos, viz., "The Holy City" and "The Better Land." Mrs. Gordon presided at the organ. We are much indebted to our friends for a very generous offertory.

Holywood—A Sale of Work, organised by the members of the Sewing Circle, was held in the Schoolroom of the First Presbyterian Church on Friday afternoon, April 27th, to help the congregational finances. Mrs. Omar C. Nelson, in a few gracious words, declared the sale open, and was presented with a sachet by Thelma Armstrong, a tiny fairy from the wishing well. She was also given a cordial vote of thanks, moved by Lady Campbell. The stalls were well supplied with saleable goods of many sorts, and the effort was well supported by local friends and also by others from neighbouring Churches. Among the patrons were the Moderator of our Church (Rev. J. J. Magill, of Rademon), and Mrs. Magill. The amount realised was £110 15s 0d, and all who worked so willingly to make the sale a success are to be congratulated on the result. The stall-holders were:—Needlework, etc.—Mrs. W. Patterson, Mrs. James Shannon, jun. Cakes — Mrs. R. Steele and Mrs. W. J. Harvey. White Elephants—Lady Campbell, Mrs. Omar C. Nelson, Mrs. Gardiner, Miss Nelson, and Miss Malcolm. Sweets—Mrs. Lockett, Mrs. Robinson, Miss Henderson, Miss Ena Meneely. Groceries—Mrs. W. Shannon and Mrs. G. Armstrong. Teas—Mrs. G. Henderson, Miss Graham, Miss Margaret Graham, Mrs. Purdy, Misses R. Harvey, Jean Shannon, and Molly Patterson. Fairy Well—Miss S. Meneely, and Sheila and Thelma Armstrong. Ice cream—Myra and Hedley Shannon. Bagatelle—Ronald Robinson.

The annual Children's May Flower Service was held on Sunday morning, May 6th, and was conducted by Rev. J. Begg, of Larne. The Sunday School scholars brought flowers to the Church, which were afterwards taken to the Children's Hospital, Belfast. Their collections for the Sunday School Cot in the Hospital amounted to £2 14s 6d.

DEATH.

ENNIS—At Ballyhalbert, on Wednesday, May 9th, 1934, Jane, the beloved wife of Hugh Ennis, late of The Farm, Ballyhemlin.

It would be a great convenience if remittances now due are sent to Rev. Alfred Davison, Dromore.

HISTORICAL NOTES.

Items From an Old Scrap Book.

(H. J. F. ORR).

In the early 60's quite a number of Young Men's Christian Associations were started in connection with our Churches. Larne seems to have had for a time a strong branch, as in December, 1860, the "Whig" devoted a column and a half to their anniversary meeting. About the same time Mutual Improvement Societies were formed. These lasted well into the 80's. Seventy years ago presentations to our country ministers generally took the form of livestock. Larne gave Rev. C. Porter a pair of farm horses; Moneyrea presented Rev. Jellie with a horse and gige. Up to 1861 York Street Church was a member of Remonstrant Synod, but on the adoption of a new Code of Discipline by that Synod they separated, and were admitted into Antrim Presbytery. All our congregations figure in this old Scrap Book which, by the way, was used by the late Rev. Crozier when compiling his Life of Dr. Montgomery. Crumlin congregation installed an organ in 1853, Rev. J. Scott Porter preaching and appropriate sermon.

In this same year a clipping records that Rev. Wm. Hall, of Greyabbey, led in prayer at the installation of the Rev. Samuel Longfellow to the First Unitarian Society Brooklyn, N.Y. This Church was formed in 1833. The Remonstrant Synod in its early days rarely met in Belfast. Larne, Warrenpoint, Newtownards, Comber, and even Ballymena were favoured among others. The second Sunday in August, 1846, was an important day in Killinchy, the present Meeting House being opened by Dr. Montgomery. The collectors came from all parts — Donacloney, Drumaness, Kirkcubbin, Killyleagh, Dromore, etc. The cost of the building was about £1,200. Few of us today are aware of the wonderful publicity given our denomination by the "Northern Whig" in its early days. Even in 1851 it devoted a column and a half to the annual meeting of the B. and F., although only one Irish minister, Rev. R. E. B. Maclellan, of Dromore, is mentioned. It is interesting to read that in 1861 our Stephen's Greene Church, Dublin, was designed by a firm of Belfast architects, a competition being held for designs.

Charity sermons were one means of raising money to assist public institutions. In 1829, Rev. John Mitchel, of Newry, preaching in the 2nd Church (All Souls), in aid of the House of Industry, had among the collectors the Marquis of Donegall, Sir Stephen May (Sovereign), and officers of the garrison. £194 4s 0d was a generous collection.

Rev. Henry Montgomery is thanked by no less than twenty-four Masonic Lodges for "his very impressive sermon" at Dunmurry on the anniversary of St. John, 1829. I fancy this was one of Dunmurry Church's big days.

We should take quite an interest in St. Vincent Street Church, Glasgow, for in 1835 several of our Churches took up collections for its Building Fund at special services.

S. & J. HEWITT

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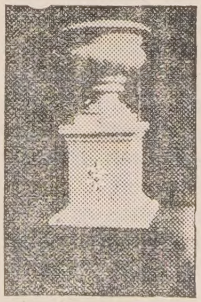

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IMPRESSIONS OF THE WEST OF IRELAND.

(MRS. V. GREGG).

"The Irish Pale" is west of the Shannon, and has been so called since the time of Cromwell, when he banished across the Shannon all Royalists who would not submit to the Parliamentary Government. This happened in 1654, and any found east of the Shannon after May 1st of that year were killed, even women and children, without exception. The migration was a painful one, many dying on the way. They were people of noble families, and so could not stand the hardships. The descendants of these people are found to-day in the Cabruis in Connaught, and Connaught is fairly thickly populated. In Connemara the cabins are so near each other that Stephen Gwynn has described the cottages as if they had been shaken out of a pepper-pot.

The country is a beautiful one—with its sedgy glens, black blue and purple mountains, wild bays, brown bogs, towering cliffs, such as is seen in Clare. Connemara, west of Galway, is vivid; pools with lilies, rocks everywhere, very tiny fields with stone walls, built as they are without mortar and the stones not closely fitting, they are called "lace walls," and with the sun behind them, shining through them, the term is appropriate. The soil has practically to be made, the stones are removed to make the walls, and the soil is brought from a distance. Mountains of curious shape, like the Twelve Pins, go down to the sea, while off from the shore are the Three Islands, the Aran — "Aran of the Saints," so called because St. Enda, one of the earliest Christian pioneers, pushed out to the islands in search of solitude; but was followed by many disciples.

It became a necessary part of religious education to spend a period under his direction. Columba sojourned here, and later pilgrims flocked from Britain and the Continent.

The people are descendants of the "tribes," the ancient Irish, mixed with a little Spanish, as shown by names such as Costello. The peasants seem to take their pleasures in melancholy (they have a dance like the dance of death). They resemble very much the people of the Highlands of Scotland—although poor, "gentlemen all!" their sad pride tells of lost rank. They have an absolute ignorance of law—not in a rebellious spirit—but an oblivious one, natural to men who have suffered.

The people of Mayo, one finds to be descendants of Ulster families; hence so many Protestants there. They differ from Galway men in so far as they are more prone to self-pity; they have not the pride of Galway men. One thing common to all is **resentment** — an abiding sense of injustice.

Connemara is a land of shadows; they drift everywhere over mountains, bogs, glens, loughs and sea—and over the people. Old women and girls in red petticoats and bare feet, and boys over seven in petticoats — for they believe that fairies like to steal boys and make them changelings, and so they dress the boys like girls to deceive the fairies. They believe strongly in good and bad fairies.

The people talk Irish, but a jarvey was driving an Englishman on his side-car and he spoke to his horse in English, and to his friends on the road in Irish. The Englishman asked him why he spoke in English to his horse. "Sure," said he, "an' isn't the English good enough for him!"

They speak of the Famine as the Hunger, but will not talk about it—it has left too deep a scar to be discussed.

There remains a great iron porringer, big enough for a bath, used to make porridge for the parishioners, who came to the rectory for it.

The very poor still cannot afford even matches, but continue the old custom of saving some of the fire to start the next day's fire. The last act the man performs at night is to scrape together the ashes of the day's fire and cover them with dry leaf, while he says this short prayer:—

"I save this fire,
As Christ once saved all.
May Brigid care and keep it,
On Mary's High Son I call,
The Three Angels most mighty
In Heaven's Hall
Protect us, this house,
Until day shall dawn."

There is belief in Tyrnanogue, the vanishing island, an earthly paradise according to an ancient tradition—the Island of the Blessed—"the other country," as it is called in Connemara, where the spirits of the departed live in sight of their former homes.

At the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, the King is represented by the Lord High Commissioner, who, in the name of the King, opens and closes the proceedings, and the Moderator does the same in the name of Christ, as King and Head of the Church. We learn from "The Listener" that Mr. John Buchan, the popular writer, has again been appointed Commissioner. "Scotland is persistently starved of ceremonial, and the bright pageantry of Assembly Week is a welcome break in the clouds that persistently hang over even Prince's Street. It is reported that 36 per cent. of the population are without any religious or Church affiliation. Of the adult population, 42 per cent. adhere to the Kirk, and 13 per cent. belong to the Roman Catholics. Wholesale Scottish emigration, accompanied by Irish immigration, accounts for the population 'every year becoming less Scottish in blood, tradition and religious attachment.' The The Assembly debate ought to be lively and as frank as the report itself."

— The Unitarian and — Free Christian Laymen's League.

—:o:—

BELFAST CHAPTER

meets in the CENTRAL HALL, ROSEMARY STREET, at 8 p.m., Third Thursday of the month, October to May, inclusive.

OBJECTS (inter alia).

To encourage laymen to take a more active part in the work of the Churches.

To form a bond of union and closer co-operation between the members of the various congregations.

The Committee invite those who are not already members to join. The minimum subscription is 2/6, and further particulars may be obtained from—

MR. J. H. GILLILAND,

35 Rosemary St., Belfast, Hon. Sec.

MR. J. EDMONDSON, Jr., Asst. Hon, Sec

19 Lime Street, Belfast

GOD'S THOUGHT OF HIMSELF.

(BY ANNIE BESANT).

Never yet has been broken
The silence eternal;
Never yet has been spoken
In accents supernal
God's thought of Himself.

We grope in our blindness,
The darkness enfolds Him:
O fatherly kindness!
That he who beholds Him
May see with the soul.

Still the veil is unriven
That hides the All-Holy;
Still no token is given
That satisfies wholly
The cravings of man.

But unhasting advances
The march of the ages,
The truth-seeker's glances
Unrolling the pages
Of God's revelation.

Impatience unheeding,
Time, slowly revolving,
Unresting, unspeeding,
Is ever evolving
Fresh truth about God.

Human speech has not broken
The stillness supernal,
Yet there ever is spoken,
Through silence eternal,
With growing distinctiveness,
God's thought of Himself.

A GENTLEMAN!

There are certain things, if we may so express it, which ne gentleman will do. He will not be dirty in appearance, and unclean in speech; he will not lie, or cheat, or steal; he will not exploit a woman, or abuse a child; he will not oppress the weak, or toady to the strong; he will gladly "fall," like Wordsworth's "Happy Warrior," rather than . . . . . leave a dead, unprofitable name"; and he will be chivalrous at all costs to himself and to the world."

JOHN HAYNES HOLMES.

REVIEWS.

"The Challenge of Humanism," by W. B. Tavener—Religious Series, No. 19. Lindsay Press. Price 1/-.

The opening chapter has the text: "In religion, accent is everything—Professor Sir S. Rodhakrishman. "Humanism" is introduced "as not really 'ism' at all." "It shares with all the great religions, and ultimately is at war with no kind of righteousness or reasonableness." That is precisely a definition of Theology. Evidently Humanism has a hold in the United States, and Emerson is cited as the first great American teacher of this sort, particularly in his essays "Self Reliance" and "The Sovereignty of Ethics." Religion is defined here as "the attempt to explain and defeat evil, which has for its parallel the Hindu axiom, "The object of philosophy is to put an end to pain."

There are gleanings from all over the world, ancient and modern; but we should remember the author lives in Edinburgh. It's a book for these days, and is stimulating reading. One very good passage is from a section dealing with the growth of the God-idea, "Consistency, the Biblical God is the God of battles when the Hebrews were warriors; the God of law when they were settlers; the God of justice and mercy when they were citizens; the God of wisdom when they were learners and teachers; and the God of love when their difficulties called for the mightiest values."

"Liberty, Diversity, Fraternity," by John C. Ballantyne, M.A.—Religious Series, No. 20. Lindsay Press. Price 1/-.

This is a book by a great preacher, of whom we in Ireland ought to know more of. Foreword: "We desire to support the plea advanced in these pages. We reserve the right to our own individual judgment upon the themes considered in detail, and the author himself would be the first to agree that we should do so, but we are in hearty sympathy with the thesis here put forward, and we bid the book God-speed." This is signed by seven clergymen of all denominations. The slogan which forms the title of the book, it will be observed, has been amended. In the old one it was "Equality" and in the new one it is "Divinity." "Equality" served a good purpose at one time, but it became a fetter of the mind, and "Diversity" should take its place, and that is the theme. Why? Simply because we are different, and "uniformity," as we know in history and personal experience, can become a tyranny. "A little friend of mine showed his home-work to his teacher in a preparatory school the other day. Correctly done. And over the page some more figures. "What's this?" asked the teacher. "Oh!" bashfully, "I thought of that as a new way of doing that sum!" "Do it the way you're told," said the teacher, "and don't be a fool!" And the so-called 'educator' stamped down (did not lead out) the new creative thought. "Philistine!"

AGGRESSIVE PROPAGANDA.

At the opening of Carlisle Church, the late Earl of Carlisle, who was a devoted Unitarian, remarked that he "would not suggest, what would be an impertinence, an aggressive propaganda." With reference to the sermons in Liverpool Cathedral, the Bishop stated: "that in no case had such visiting ministers violated the hospitality of the Cathedral authorities by obtruding their own doctrinal differences." It might have been just as well if the matter had been allowed to rest there, and a dignified silence maintained, in face of the subsequent action which has been taken, at least while the case was subjudice. If when the sermons were preached no charge of abuse of privilege was possible, it does seem that in the very active propaganda which has ensued, with such statements as "Trinitarianism has never emerged except where an 'authoritative' priesthood has led," the cordiality and good will shown in the recent gesture is apt to be prejudiced. J. B.

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